

# **City of Rockville Environment Commission**

## **Sustainable Development and Energy Committee (SDEC)**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday February 23, 2010**

**Diamondback Terrapin Room, City Hall**

**7:00 pm**

#### **1. Welcome / Agenda Review/ Minutes Adoption**

Seth Adams called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 pm. In attendance: SDEC Chair Seth Adams, Laura Schlee and staff liaison Erica Shingara.

#### **2. Environment Commission Report**

Seth Adams reported on the February 16<sup>th</sup> Environment Commission (EC) meeting.

- The EC is identifying budget priorities. Commissioners were asked to send ideas to the Outreach Committee.
- Science Day is scheduled for Sunday, April 25, 2010 at Montgomery College. The EC booth will include the new watershed model, rain barrel, and energy demonstration materials.
- The SDEC discussed opportunities to promote recruitment, green building, and energy conservation at Science Day, Hometown Holidays, and Rockville Reports. For example, members will research existing public education materials (BGE, Pepco, DOE), activities (bike-generated electricity), and information on energy audits and effectiveness. Environmental Management is developing a handout to help with recruitment by providing an overview of the Environment Commission and each committee. The EC has outlet insulation covers. In the past, the SDEC organized donations of CFLs.
- Earth Hour is on Saturday, March 27 at 8:30 p.m. Residents and businesses are urged to turn off their lights for an hour. There will be a press release and article in the Rockville Reports. The SDEC should support this event as well as opportunities to encourage businesses to turn off their lights when they are closed.
- Julie Carr was unanimously selected to fill a Commission vacancy. Her name will be forwarded through the City Clerk to the Mayor for further consideration by the Mayor and Council.

#### **3. Building Code Update and Green Building**

The proposed amendments to Chapter 5, "Buildings and Building Regulations", including Article XIV, "Green Building Regulations," were introduced at the January 25, 2010 Mayor and Council meeting. The first public hearing was held on February 8<sup>th</sup> and a second public hearing was held on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Three people testified at the second public hearing and the Mayor and Council requested that the public record be held open until March 22, 2010. Discussion and Instruction is tentatively scheduled for April 5, 2010.

#### Public Hearing:

- The Chamber of Commerce expressed support for the ordinance and interest in working with the City on implementation and incentives.
- A resident wanted the code to specify when sections apply (e.g., what standards apply when a fire damages part of an existing structure). This is currently specified in the model ICC Codes (Chapter 1, Administration, Section 101 through 102.6).
- A resident expressed concern that more time is needed so that all citizens associations can be informed and that residents have time to review and understand the requirements. Staff is continuing meeting with citizen associations. A meeting with the Twinbrook Community is scheduled on February 23, 2010 to discuss the residential building code requirements.

#### Green Building Incentives

- The Committee discussed the opportunity to build on the proposed green building regulations and incorporate an incentive program that encourages exceptional and innovative sustainable projects, as well as retrofits of existing buildings. The SDEC reviewed and commented on a draft incentive program.
- Suggested that the program clarify what incentives apply to commercial and residential projects (e.g., green review fee, expedited permitting, tax incentives).
- Inquired how tax incentives would work and if residential credits are available.
- Suggested an internal audit of the City's plan review and permitting process to identify what may be streamlined.
- Suggested a residential bulk purchasing program where residents would pre-register for energy efficient products (e.g., HVAC units, programmable thermostats, etc.) and the City would negotiate a reduced bulk purchase price for the units.

#### Program Implementation

- Reviewed a list of LEED, ICC, and ASHRAE standards and reference materials needed to implement the proposed green building requirements of Chapter 5.
- Suggested publications on green products and materials would be helpful for both City staff and contractors.

#### **4. Member News / Announcements / Upcoming Events**

- There is interest in recruiting additional members to expand expertise and promote community outreach. Suggestions included working with the Outreach and Education Committee on promotion materials and going to events such as Science Café, concert series, and other green building professional venues to encourage volunteers.
- That National Capital Regional Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council now has a Montgomery County Branch that will sponsor networking events, educational opportunities, and LEED workshops. More information: <http://www.usgbcncr.org/>

#### **5. Wrap-up and Adjourn**

The next SDEC meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 23, 2010 at the Rockville City Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 pm.